

79 Voices
re: 2010
Dietary
Guidelines

January 22

2009

Following are 79 comments from people concerned with creating increased health and eliminating disease in America. Thank you for taking the time to consider these voices prior to finalizing the 2010 Dietary Recommendations.

What kind of recommendations would you like to see the USDA make?

1. I would like the USDA to make the 2010 guidelines based on the available and current research of experts in the field of nutrition such as Dr.s Richard Feinman, Jeff Volek, Eric Westman and so many others that seem to be overlooked by the governing agencies. I would like people to be apprised of all healthy options included carbohydrate restriction. If a low fat diet works for some people – recommend the proper way to do it. Overall it appears as though it has led to a dramatic increase in obesity and disease. Carbohydrate restricted diets work for many people and the science has shown us over and over that it is not 'dangerous' as so many people have been led to believe. Equal weight must be given to the science of carb restriction that has told us how we can increase health and decrease the number of people suffering from obesity and diabetes. I ask that your recommendations are based on the facts and let the people choose the option best suited for them.

The Nutrition and Metabolism journal (nutritionandmetabolism.com) as well as the Metabolism Society Website ([www.Metabolism Society.org](http://www.MetabolismSociety.org)) provide much of the research for your review.
Laurie Cagnassola

2. From: Nate England <nateengland@comcast.net>

Date: Sun, Jan 18, 2009 at 7:11 PM

What dietary advice would I, as a low carb advocate, give for the general public? The most important advice is to simply say, "Eat fewer refined carbohydrates". Then explain what is considered a refined carbohydrate. This definition should be very thorough - listing all types and kinds. It should also explain the difference between low and high glycemic foods and meals.

Another benefit that the committee could provide is to define the various degrees of low carb and low fat diets. Such definitions would go a long way to clarify the discussion of diets. If there are a dozen definitions of what a low carb or low fat diet is, then how can anyone really know with any accuracy what is being said? In my opinion, there should be a whole range of definitions - say, no carb, very low carb, low carb, etc. The lack of a thorough definition of these diets just adds to the confusion. Your committee is in the unique position to provide that service.

The Committee could state basic scientific facts about nutrition that have been distorted. Some of the facts that I've seen distorted include the following. First, there are no essential carbohydrates. The body can manufacture all of the carbs it needs and, in fact, can do it all day long with no bad effects. In fact, there may be a benefit from the stand point of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The extra step to convert proteins into carbs obviously takes energy. Further, please be careful to note that many foods that contain carbs have valuable vitamins and nutrients. So that it is a matter of balancing the bad effects of the carbs and the good effects of the nutrients.

Second, there is a metabolic change in one's body when the diet changes from a medium carb diet to a low carb (or very low carb?) diet and visa versa. This change will have definite symptoms that one needs to be aware of. Define the range of these symptoms and why they happen.

Third, everyone's metabolism is different and will thus respond differently to various diets.

The fourth and most likely fact not to be clarified is that the scientific evidence does not unequivocally support the fact that a low fat diet prevents obesity or heart illnesses. To go a step further, a diet that restricts carbohydrates appears to be the best diet for prevention of obesity, heart illnesses and all of the other metabolic syndrome illnesses. I won't say much about this other than that Gary Taubes in his 'Good Calories, Bad Calories' book explains all of the reasons for that distortion.

My last comment concerns the assumption that therapeutic measures should differ from preventative advice. Bad advice is bad advice whether you have diabetes or not. I will agree that a sick person may have to follow good advice more strictly than a healthy one, but the advice or the statement of fact should be the same.

To this end, I was insulted by a doctor representing the American Diabetes Association on D-Life. He stated that doctors should distort the facts to help a diabetic not suffer depression or some other mental stress. Give me a break. The extreme damage that my body suffered from that distortion (deliberate or not) is much, much worse than the depression I would have suffered knowing that I should restrict my carbs or the frustration at not being able to do same. Who died and made him God? Sick as well as healthy people need to know the truth so that they can decide if they want to be healthy. No distortion should be allowed, no matter how complicated or unsure the truth is.

Within a week of eating that way in April of 2005, my frozen shoulders thawed, my trigger finger stopped catching, my blood sugars evened out, my energy increased and my good moods expanded. After a few months, I lost 35 pounds without trying to do that, my lipids improved and, most importantly, my A1c went from 7.0 to 5.5. Maybe I wouldn't lose all of my eye sight before I die.

3. from: Fred Hahn <fhahn@seriousstrength.com>

Date: Fri, Jan 16, 2009 at 4:53 PM

subject: USDA comments

Place the meat, poultry, eggs and fish box at the bottom of the food pyramid, and the grains portion at the very bottom on the top with sweets and refined sugars. On top of meat place non starchy veggies, on top of this cheese and dairy, fruit on top of this, and grains and sweets at the very top.

4. from: Marnae Wilson <mwilson@certiport.com>

Date: Thu, Jan 15, 2009 at 3:33 PM

subject: USDA

I have been following a low carb moderate fat/protein diet for eight years. In the first year, I lost 35 pounds and have maintained that loss. My blood pressure, blood stats, and overall health are outstanding, even though I have fibromyalgia. I would recommend eating low carb for everyone, not just overweight or diabetic people. However, if nutritionists would simply ask people to lots of water, eat 8 servings a day of fruits and vegetables, lots of regular-fat dairy and eggs, a moderate amount of unprocessed meat, a small amount of unprocessed starch, and almost no packaged, processed, or fast food, no sweet or artificially sweetened drinks, and no added sugar at all, people would be healthy, energetic, and alert. Cutting fat and increasing sugar and starch is not healthy eating. But the low fat, high carb mantra is so ingrained in the medical and nutritional worlds that it seems impossible to change the standard that is making people fat, unhappy, and unhealthy. Incidentally, I have noticed that both low fat and low carb diets work just fine as long as the dieter cuts out sugar completely. Thanks for letting me voice my opinion.

Marnae Wilson

5. fromWorc83@aol.com

Date: Thu, Jan 15, 2009 at 2:21 PM

subject: USDA

In 2002 I decided to lose 20 pounds. Initially I tried to follow the mainstream low fat, lower calories way of eating. I did lose a few pounds but always felt hungry and rather tired. On a low carb diet, I lost 20 pounds and kept it off for 5 1/2 years.

I hope that this way of eating will be addressed by the USDA and better guidelines set. People don't seem to have a clue as to just what is a healthy way to eat in order to maintain or arrive at a healthy weight.

Regards,

Joanne Kaplan

6. from: Michael Sawley <mikesawley@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, Jan 15, 2009 at 10:08 AM

subject: Suggestions for USDA diet guidelines

The best advice I've heard is: Eat vegetables and meat, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch, and no sugar.

The best unifying theory I've come across is that evolution has shaped what humans have adapted to eat and what our bodies can make good use of, and it is summed up by the Paleo Diet by Prof. Cordain.

Both approaches are relatively low in carbohydrate and basically demand that one gives up bread, flour, and other grain products. This may be difficult, but in my case my body physique and general energy levels have greatly improved.

Thank You,

Mike

7. from: Sol Barsever <sbarsever@comcast.net>

Date: Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 10:02 AM

subject: New dietary guidelines

I would like to add my experience with "Restricted Carbs" lifestyle to the information you are gathering:

I'm a 61 year old male, 5'5" and currently weigh 174lb. Other than loosing close to 50lb in the first year of changing to low carbs (four years ago), my HDL went from 40 to averaging 110, my triglyceride count went from 109 to 78, I am very physically active and fill great. I come from a family of severe history (both sides!) of diabetes and heart disease, and since I changed to this life style I have a clean bill of health, got reed of my chronic "heartburns". I eat 10% carbs, 30-40% protein, and the rest is fat (not restricted, including saturated fat).

I would recommend to change the pyramid to: 20% carbs (absolutely no refined ones), 30% protein and 50% fat.

Sol Barsever

8. from: Nancy Milligan <npm@cox.net>

date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 11:13 PM

subject: Comments to USDA

I have had a lot of success managing some of the conditions that middle age was bringing me on a low carb diet. First off was the pounds, my blood pressure dropped too. I found that getting off all grains helped me with my perpetual IBS and getting off gluten grains in particular seemed to make

most of my arthritis issues go away. I have been eating "low carb" for 5 years now and find it totally sustainable and easy to stick with.

My own food pyramid would have meat/egg/nuts and seed protein on bottom, fats on the next level (excluding vegetable oils), low carb vegetables then at the very top would be fruits like berries and sweeteners like erythritol and splenda.

Nancy Milligan

9. from: Laurel Lovelace <pythonesk@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 1:46 PM

subject: Recommendations for USDA

I am sending you the sort of "recommendations [I] would like to see the USDA make." I already recommend a low-carb diet to everyone I know. I've got my whole family converted whether they need to lose weight or not. I've managed to turn my health around using a low-carb diet. My bloodwork is perfect, according to my doctor, but when I tell her how I did it she just gets a glazed look in her eyes.

Spread the word about the benefits of excluding white sugar, white flour, and other simple carbs from the American diet. The Standard American Diet (SAD) is sadly lacking in nutrients and overly abundant in empty sugar carbs. I'm 49 years old and distinctly remember that it was widely-understood in the 1960's that it was "sugars and starches" that made one fat. No one questioned it because it was true, is true, and will always be true. Nevertheless, I fell for the low-fat propaganda of the 70's, 80's and 90's much to my detriment.

In the following years I lost 82 pounds (in about 15 months) on a low-carb diet. I've been drinking raw milk for nine months and have had no adverse effects. Thanks for listening!

Laurel Lovelace, Elizabethton, TN

10. from: Anthony Specca <anspeca@verizon.net>

Date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 7:14 PM

Subject: USDA Comments

I have been a food label reader for many years. It started when I began a low carb diet several years ago which resulted in the loss of over 50 pounds. I have noticed a trend to replace fat in the American diet by low fat convenience foods. Unfortunately, the industry replaced the flavor lost by removing the fat with the addition of salt and sugar (principally HFCS). Thus, the foods are low in fat

but high in sugar (a carbohydrate) and a water retention agent. This has converted American tastes to salty high calorie foods.

For the longevity and health of the average American, especially school aged children, this has to stop.

Sincerely,

Anthony Specca

11. from: Hall, Michael <MICHAEL.HALL@pioneer.com>

date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 5:22 PM

subject: USDA Low carb diet

I am sending this response to your question about low carb. I was told that type 2 diabetes had caught up with me even though I was very active and not over weight. My doctor insisted I see a dietician and get some information about my eating habits now that my blood sugars were too high. I was told to eat 60% of my calories as carb's. My blood sugars sky rocketed.

I started looking for an alternative as I was afraid to death of this disease. I tried a low carb approach. Less than 40 grams of carbs daily now and my beloved breads, potatoes and pasta gone. My A1c when first diagnosed 10.2. My last 18 months at my doctors appt's. My A1c 5.9, 6.1 and 5.9.

60% of us are now considered obese and you want to know if low carbs work. READ THE STUDIES. The solution is not statins (as know for the first time in my life my lipids are considered normal).

Michael Hall

12. From: chakaal@tanstaaf.com

Date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 4:55 PM

Subject : Tell the USDA

First of all, the obesity statistics for this country, particularly that show children do not suffer at the same rates as adults, indicate that prevention is critical for the health of future generations even if we cannot salvage those of us who are adults. It may be that while the US cannot afford to cut the food industries off at the knee where carb-laden products are concerned, it may be necessary to curb their advertising and put over-consumption warning labels on sugary or very starchy foods.

I felt utterly lousy 24/7 for years, literally, until I went low carb, at which point the following list of problems pretty much disappeared, except for carb relapses:

Insomnia

Gastric Reflux

low level nausea

weight gain

constipation

excessively long, painful periods

lethargy, lack of energy

I further note that my sinuses finally cleared up and arthritis symptoms dissipated when I worked out that a wheat allergy caused them both. 30% of asymptomatic people who were tested displayed antigens to wheat in fecal analysis. This does not include people like me, and the folks who are outright celiac or dealing with other autoimmune problems that wheat gluten is known to contribute to. When a third of the populace has this kind of reaction to a product I should think it worth the cost and effort to educate people about these grains (which are not foods humans ate for 99% of their existence) so that health and vitality can be restored.

If this country wants to remain a world leading power we cannot afford to have most of our population suffering the symptoms of overweight. We need our population healthful and energetic, alert and fully functional.

13. From J.T. <jedwards@lakeplains.net>

Date : Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 4:21 PM

Subject : USDA - low carb diet

I think all diabetics should be on a low carb diet. The high carb diet pushed by the AHA and ADA is killing people. People who follow their advice find themselves increasing their medications and still suffering from diabetic complications.

I started the low carb WOE in Sept. 2006 after failing to bring my blood glucose down following the low fat/ high carb mantra and meds. Being basically wheelchair bound and not being able to exercise it took me 2 years but I lost 68 pounds. It only took me a couple of months to bring my blood sugars down from over 200 to less than 100. When I started low carb my HA1C was over 10. My last HA1C was 5.7. At present I am on no prescription meds.

I was on Lipitor for a couple of years until it attacked my calf muscles. A CK test came back with high levels and my liver enzymes were also high. The doctor told me to discontinue the Lipitor immediately. After a few months my muscles got better but it took a long time for my liver enzymes to come back to normal. Did the statin keep him from having a heart attack? NO!

Up until six months ago I took a 325mg enteric aspirin a day and had since my bypass surgery. I now take two 81mg enteric aspirins daily. In Feb. 2002 I had to quit taking my aspirin for a hospital procedure. A week later I had a mild stroke that affected the left side of my body. I found out later that stopping aspirin therapy increases the chance of a stroke. CAT scans and other tests could not find any other cause. I think my blood thickened up because of the higher triglycerides from my low fat/ high carb diet and diabetes.

From my personal experience I recommend a low carb diet for everyone. It is time that the powers that be look at the facts and not the hype. Being politically correct is killing people!!!

JT Edwards

14. From Gary Katch <gkatch@gmail.com>

Date :Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 12:09 PM

Subject: USDA

All that we successful low-carb eaters amount to is a growing amount of anecdotal data. As our friend Gary Taubes has said, there is another hypothesis, that carbs are the villain, not fat, in the obesity crisis, but this has never been tested scientifically. Neither has the fat hypothesis, although that has not prevented governments from issuing guidelines based on it.

I think we do need to get awareness and consciousness-raising efforts for low-carb up. I fantasize something like a low-carb-million-man-march on Washington. Imagine a million fit, lean, healthy people of all ages and races marching, proclaiming, "We eat fat! Fat makes you thin! Sugar makes you fat!"

Sincerely,
Gary Katch

15. From: Brenda Stimpson <brendasp@gte.net>

Date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 11:38 AM

subject: submission for Nutrition Guidelines 2010

I submit that there is a strong focus in the 2010 guidelines toward reducing carbohydrates in the national diet (the literature in support of this is legion). I am not personally overweight but on a high

carb /moderate fat diet I have low energy and higher LDL cholesterol levels than when I "low carb" – no afternoon sleepiness and no weight gain (ever) despite consuming up to 3500 calories a day on occasion. I am 42 years old 5'4" and I weigh 118 pounds. I never worry about calories in my diet. If I increase my carbs, I increase my weight. Period. That is the relationship.

I propose dietary recommendation of: zero table sugar and high fructose corn syrup; eliminating, or reducing as close to zero as possible, refined starches. If this is the recommendation the reality will be somewhat higher than this but the message might sink in that carbs are a problem for public health and obesity.

Thank you.

Brenda Stimpson

16. From: mt3t3l1 <mt3t3l1@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 9:58 AM

Subject: USDA Recommendations

I have a Ph.D. in medical biochemistry. I am 61 years old and have been low-carbing for 5 1/2 years. I am in good health and am at a normal weight, with a BMI of about 21. For me low-carbing is not a temporary diet, but a permanent lifestyle. From my experience and training, I would recommend that the USDA do the following:

1. Teach people that there is no minimum amount of carbohydrate that needs to be eaten--the body can make all the carbohydrate it requires from protein and the glycerol portion of fats.
2. Teach people that carbohydrates do not have to be avoided altogether, but that eating 100 grams or less of carbohydrate per day is a good long-term strategy to feel energetic and maintain a healthy weight.
3. Teach people that the best carbohydrates are found in nutritionally-dense vegetables, berries and nuts. These sources of carbohydrates do not spike blood sugar and after many years of their consumption, are unlikely to result in insulin resistance and its accompanying problems.

Sincerely yours,

Marilyn A. Turnbow

17. From: sue <locarb4health@iinet.net.au>

date: Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 12:53 AM

subject: 2010 Guidelines

The 2010 guidelines should include:

- 1) restrictions on starchy carbohydrates - 1 serving per day
- 2) fibrous vegetables should be at around 3 or 4 servings daily
- 3) protein at each meal
- 4) good fat at each meal - nuts and seeds, olive oil, butter
- 5) discourage the consumption of margarine and vegetable fats except olive oil
- 6) all pre-diabetics or diabetics or insulin resistant folks, heart patients to be put on low-carb diet with 20g carbs daily
- 7) fruit consumption limit of 1-2 pieces daily especially if diabetic
- 8) removal of high fructose corn syrup from the food supply
- 9) education to show meat consumption healthy and nutritious, address the myth that vegetarian or vegan diets healthier

Regards,
Sue Staltari

18. From: Nina Wagman

date: Fri, Jan 16, 2009 at 5:01 PM

subject: USDA

I sincerely hope that my personal experience with carbohydrate restriction will illustrate that the benefits of this way of eating should not be limited to its use as a therapeutic diet in treating obesity. I was able to solve myriad health issues simply by switching from a "healthy" Mediterranean Diet to a very simple carbohydrate-restricted plan. I expect to continue this highly valuable "therapeutic" diet of carbohydrate restriction to stay healthy for the remainder of my life.

Here is my story:

I am a sixty-year-old woman and I have been restricting carbohydrates for over seven years. All the health issues with which I had I suffered for years, even decades, were completely reversed and cured by this very simple change in my diet.

At my annual exams, I enumerated a myriad of symptoms. Instead of the list getting shorter, over the years it grew. Ailments became chronic and spanned years, even decades.

My litany of complaints:

- ? Chronic vaginal yeast infections
- ? Frequent urinary tract infections
- ? Hypoglycemic episodes
- ? Irregular heartbeat & fibrillation
- ? Frequent urination
- ? Blurry vision
- ? Chronic fatigue
- ? Tinea corporis skin fungus infections
- ? Bloating & intestinal gas
- ? Heartburn
- ? Mood swings & depression
- ? Cognitive thinking difficulties
- ? Borderline hypertension
- ? Weight gain
- ? Loss of muscle mass, stamina & strength
- ? Joint pain
- ? Hay fever
- ? Heartburn

This collection of maladies is a clear indication that I was becoming insulin resistant. Clearly, I was on the path to becoming diabetic, though I did not know it at the time.

I continued to lose weight until I reached 132 pounds, which for my height of 5'7" is normal. The weight loss was wonderful, but I had initiated carbohydrate restriction to undo the years of damage done by eating a "healthy" Mediterranean Diet. I am infinitely more pleased that all my medical issues have been eliminated, precisely and exclusively due to carbohydrate restriction. I feel better at sixty than I did at twenty-five years of age!

I recommend that a lifestyle of carbohydrate restriction be encouraged as a way of maintaining one's health throughout life. It can be used to regain health and to reverse the metabolic damage

done by decades of eating carbohydrates. However, in my opinion, its greatest benefit, by far, is in the creation of a healthy body as one grows from childhood to adulthood and in the maintenance of a healthy and strong body throughout life. Carbohydrate restriction can prevent the development of obesity and Type II diabetes. My personal experience illustrates that it is powerful tool in reversing metabolic syndrome. Having health and abundant energy to accomplish one's goals is a priceless thing.

Please examine with great seriousness the power that the USDA dietary guidelines have in this country. These guidelines steer the health of a nation. I ask you to choose wellness.

Regards,

Nina Wagaman

vadim, 12. January 2009, 20:14



Start with Meditarenian low carb approach! Instead of saying liberal amount of meat and butter along with saturated fat, how about saying liberal amount of non-starchy vegetables, omega 3 loaded seafood. Low carb berries. nuts, seeds and moderate amount of lean meat. Would it be an optimum low carb approach, absolutely not? But it would be something to get people started. Sort of middle ground. to get people off the standard American diet. And since most people, including doctors would support such a lifestyle, I think it would be a wise first step!

When I interviewed medical students about low carb diets, almost all 200 said they wouldn't recommend [atkins diet](#) to their future patients! But when I rephrased the question and said what about lean meat, fish, nuts, vegetables and low glycemic fruits, most agreed it is healthy and not Atkins! So I will be glad for Dr Feinman to come over and interview those students.

1. Jon, 12. January 2009, 20:24



Step 1: Cut out the sugars.

Step 2: Cut out the starches.

These steps have another advantage beside being simple and effective. They will withstand arguments. No reputable “nutrition expert” will disagree with the first at all. Many will quibble about the second and many will argue that there are more import priorities (cutting saturated fats or other nonsense), but not many will go to bat to defend the need to starches in human nutrition.

Simple. Effective. Hard to argue.

2. Jonny, 12. January 2009, 20:31



I think the CrossFit people put it best in their guidelines:

“Eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch and no sugar.”

3. Jim Valance, 12. January 2009, 20:58



In my own experience I had a dramatic weight loss (72 lbs.) resulting in a much improved self-image, accompanied by LOTS of compliments. Physiologically, the elimination of what I believe was an intestinal fungal infection: flatulence and diarrhea completely halted. No more cramps. Also a lowering of blood pressure and drop in amount of BP medication by about half. Lowering of blood sugar values (and almost certainly insulin levels) in an adult male with a Type 2 diabetic parent. I haven't been diagnosed as diabetic.

I don't remember where I heard this, but it may be from both of you (MRE & MDE) in one of your books. Consider what the feedlot owners use to fatten the livestock - carb! They're not force feeding the cattle and hogs Bumble Bee Tuna, they're force feeding them feed corn and other high carb food. And it works. They get fat.

Jim

4. Jim Jozwiak, 12. January 2009, 21:21



None of this is going to be politically popular, but the #1 plank of the low-carb platform is "Do not restrict protein." The second plank would have to be "If you weigh too much, cut out starch and sugar." But I have personally found that restricting carbs only partially is unpleasant presumably because insulin sensitivity increases while fasting insulin is still elevated, leading to headaches and anxiety that don't really resolve until carbs are truly low. And I think the low-carb camp's eagerness to embrace saturated fat (which is admirable) blinds them to the problem of insulin resistance being caused by excessive myristic acid, the source of which is dairy fat, the main non-paleolithic element in the typical low-carb regime. So the unpopular but necessary mantra has to be "Eat a meat-based diet."

5. M, 12. January 2009, 22:04



I eat a low carb (<50g/day), high fat diet and have since 2003. I am a 62-year-old female. My triglycerides are 75mg. I weigh 134 pounds and am 5'7" tall. I gained 37 pounds when I quit smoking and lost it all eating low carb.

The myth of needing a diet composed of at least 50% carbs (or you'll die!) is rampant. Also, the "whole grain" push has done more harm than whatever good it could have promoted. Its interpretation is that you can eat all the "whole grains" you want — the more the healthier.

I have no idea how to translate my experience into a USDA recommendation. Maybe someone else can.

6. Ellen, 12. January 2009, 23:24



There are volumes of research results which support the efficacy of low carb diets. The general consensus of them all is that a low carbohydrate diet has the result of stabilizing and normalizing blood sugar and insulin levels, reducing triglycerides, improving the HDL to LDL cholesterol ratio, and making weight loss easier.

I can say from experience this is exactly what happens. Four years ago, I decided to give a low carb diet a try. Before I started, I had my blood work done so I could see if the diet had any effect.

For three months, I ate huge amounts of saturated fat – steaks, butter, cream cheese, hard cheese, all kinds of meat and chicken, eggs and whole milk dairy products. I restricted all forms of sugar and starch and tried to keep my carbs below 30 grams per day. I ate no fruit, no starchy vegetables or grains of any kind.

I would estimate that I was eating about 2800 calories per day. I am 5'3", my work is not physically demanding and I'm female, so my total daily energy expenditure would work out to about 2300 calories a day. Conventional medicine says that eating more than 2300 calories each day should cause me to gain weight.

After 3 months, I had my blood work done again and compared the two. Here are the results:

Total Cholesterol: Dropped from 213 to 178

Triglycerides: Dropped from 163 to 76

HDL: Increased from 48 to 52

LDL: Dropped from 132 to 109

Blood Pressure: Dropped from 120/100 to 123/72

HDL/LDL Ratio: Dropped from 2.75 to 2.02

As you can see, every health factor improved significantly. I also lost 25 pounds, even though I didn't exercise at all during this time. This experiment convinced me that a low carb diet was the most healthy way to eat.

It should convince most anybody. It's hard to believe with all the evidence like this out there that there are naysayers.

7. Katy, 12. January 2009, 23:43



Looking at the carb-restricted WOE as therapeutic is short-sighted and allows people to exclude it as a long-term, healthful way of eating. It implies that low carb is a plan that can or should be stopped when the treatment has succeeded, i.e. when weight has been lost, blood sugar levels have improved, blood pressure has normalized, and so on. After all, we wouldn't continue to take iron supplements if we no longer had anemia.

If the government must be involved in telling people what they should eat, it obviously must be in the most general of terms, as one plan certainly does not fit everyone. There cannot be just one plan, or pyramid, or pentagon, or whatever shape these guidelines will be, that can be promoted as healthful for all people. Therefore, only a few hard and fast guidelines should be presented: Do not consume trans fat. Limit consumption of sugar and HFCS. Grains and starches are not essential for health. If you like them, if your body can tolerate them, if your weight permits their consumption, eat them in moderation. The USDA should stay away from propaganda and scientifically unproven statements for achieving health such as:

"Bran provides fiber, which is important for health." (Really?)

"Most milk group choices should be fat-free or low-fat." (Why?)

"Most of the fats you eat should be polyunsaturated (PUFA) or monounsaturated (MUFA) fats." (Why? And do they know that beef fat is mostly a MUFA?)

"The MUFAs and PUFAs found in fish, nuts, and vegetable oils do not raise LDL("bad") cholesterol levels in the blood." (So?)

Failure to acknowledge the healthfulness of natural fat in the diet, and to differentiate between hydrogenated fats and natural saturated fats, ignores the science and is disingenuous. Making unproven health claims for fiber is equally so. Implications about the health dangers of cholesterol should be omitted. Ditch the fat-phobia. Americans are unhealthy (not just fat and diabetic) as a result of the astronomical amounts of sugar that their bodies have to process (11 servings of grains with no fat to slow the onslaught of sugar? What were you thinking??).

8. Ram, 13. January 2009, 1:28



I am a 45 year old male from Bangalore (India) with a very strong family history of type-2 diabetes. When I was diagnosed with impaired glucose tolerance in 2003, I had not heard of low carb diets. I paid a heavy penalty for this and became a full blown diabetic by end of 2007 despite walking and calorie reduction. When I read 'Protein Power' for the first time, I neither understood nor believed it mainly due to my bias caused by the wonderful! articles appearing in news magazines exhorting people to follow a low fat way of living. After 'intermittently' following LCD for last one year, my HgA1c has come down from 8 to 6.5. After just two weeks of LCD, my wife who is apparently in good health (just 10% overweight!) lost a significant amount of fat and her fasting blood sugar dropped from 90 to 81 mg/dl. Well! These facts are not new to the readers here. My point is, had I known about LCD earlier (unfortunately, this part of the world does not seem to be aware of it and I can't find LCD books in stores) I would never have become diabetic in the first place. So, spreading awareness about this alternative (the only one which worked for me) nutritional philosophy is really important. Secondly, both myself and my wife are vegetarians and find it very difficult to stick to LCD (< 50 g/day) with not much of food choices when we go out to eat. The adherence is tough when you are in a society of nonbelievers of LCD and becomes more difficult with hostile! medical advisers. So, for people who do not have health problems at present, the maintenance phase of PPLP (< 120 g/d) may probably the right approach.

9. Dave, 13. January 2009, 4:23



My recommendation: Take the current recommendations and do the opposite.

10. Craig Haynie, 13. January 2009, 5:08



Here's my recommendation for the USDA:

"Carbohydrates Kill"

11. [mrfreddy](#), 13. January 2009, 6:55



how bout if we keep it simple and just focus on one number. The statinators like to focus on total cholesterol, (which of course we know is bogus for a number of reasons).

Let's replace that with an emphasis on your triglycerides count. Follow any diet you like, good sir or mam, however, if your triglycerides are not below 80, you must make some changes. Here are your choices:

- 1) Eliminate all sugar and all starch. That will resolve the problem in almost all cases.
- 2) Follow any other crazy diet your heart desires, but, and this is important, keep the sugar content down. If you're still eating mostly plants and avoiding animal products (a la Furhman, etc), and if your trig. count is above 80 (it will be!) then you MUST EXERCISE A LOT EVERY DAY. At least one hour, probably two.

12. [Peter Silverman](#), 13. January 2009, 7:30



I wish the government would advise us to avoid food manufactured in factories. This would include sugar, flour and lots of stuff made with those things.

13. [Matt](#), 13. January 2009, 7:37



So the biggest obstacle is that the A in USDA stands for Agriculture, and they're not about to start a civil war with the sugar and corn lobbies.

Look at the current guidelines — it's all about inclusion, not about elimination. If we can frame the discussion in terms of inclusion, USDA will see this as a less offensive means to discuss low carb.

So to be heard, we need to talk about low carb as an acceptable option, not the BEST or ONLY option.

14. [Hugh](#), 13. January 2009, 8:11



My reasonable recommendation for the general population is that carbohydrates should only constitute 10-20% of calories and that preferably these carbohydrates would come in the form of whole grains and/or starchy vegetables. All sugar and anything made from refined grains (most pasta and bread) should be limited to an occasional treat.

My personal experience with carbohydrate restriction is that I lost 40 pounds with ease. Hunger was never, ever an issue even when I was purposefully restricting calories. Now that I am at maintenance levels my weight has stabilised with no need for calorie counting as long as I continue to eat low-carb. Some of the unexpected side effects are that I no longer get acne, my body odor has improved, and 20 years of mild depression have lifted. Now when I eat a lot of carbohydrates, I often feel groggy, bloated, and depressed.

15. [Ellen Ussery](#), 13. January 2009, 9:22



I have benefited enormously from a low carb diet: lost weight, improved blood lipids, energy, focus, mood, no more arthritis, skin problems and more. My husband did not need to lose weight, but on a moderate carb diet he also got rid of his arthritis and his lifelong heartburn.

Individuals vary in their metabolism and needs, so any single recommendation for the optimal diet for everyone only creates confusion. Ditch the pyramid.

Instead focus all your efforts on greatly reducing the foods that everyone can agree do nothing to build anyone's health and everything to create our obesity and diabetes epidemic: refined sugars and starches. Educate people on the many ways these foods can act on us to destroy our health by undermining our blood sugar regulation and the many resultant health problems. Stay with this simple message. Encourage thought and awareness. Stand up to agribusiness. You may just make a dent.

16. [Aaron Baugher](#), 13. January 2009, 9:33



When people complain that low-carbing sounds too complicated or too restrictive, I tell them they probably don't have to count carbs or go to a lot of trouble. For most people, it's as simple as:

EAT: meat, chicken, fish, vegetables (potatoes and corn are not vegetables), butter, unhydrogenated oils, nuts, berries, occasional fruit, cheese, olives, mushrooms, herbs, spices.

DO NOT EAT: grains, sugars, trans fats, or anything that comes in a box.

17. David, 13. January 2009, 9:36



My personal story: mid-50s, low-carb for one year after a lifetime of high-carb diets. Used to tolerate high-carb diet well and be able to eat large meals without gaining weight. Weight crept up over time, then started rising faster. Gradual appearance of symptoms of metabolic syndrome (fasting glucose up, blood pressure up, weight up, etc.) Low-carb diet rapidly reversed problems: lost 30 pounds without calorie restriction, blood pressure and fasting glucose down, improved general health and athletic performance (I took up running ultramarathons and now do so on little or no carbohydrates and feel good during and after the events [and I now comfortably run hilly distances of up to about 20 miles/4 hours on no supplemental food at all]). And no, the high level of exercise did not result in my weight loss and health improvement; rather the health improvement and weight loss ENABLED me to increase my level of exercise. If anything, the weight loss has plateaued and reversed slightly with increasing exercise.

My recommended changes to general dietary guidelines: start with a baseline of about 20% carbs, 65% fat, 15% protein. Increase carbs only if weight GAIN is needed. Decrease carbs further for weight loss or other specific health conditions such as diabetes. Increase protein if needed for muscle building/repair (athletes). For most people, this sort of diet is best achieved with a lot of meat, fish, nuts, and vegetables, though details can vary widely depending on availability and any religious, cultural, or specific health/allergy issues. Sugars and simple starches should be used sparingly if at all. These include nutritive sweeteners, most wheat, rice, corn, and other grain products. Fruits should also be limited: most are nutritionally predominantly sugar water. Dairy is more controversial. Personally, I do not limit dairy consumption, although some people find it desirable to limit or cut dairy entirely. Legumes and legume products (such as soy products) should probably be consumed in moderation, and may be left out by personal preference. Within these general guidelines, try to eat a wide variety of food.

I think it is most important to focus first and foremost on getting these macronutrient guidelines established and understood. Micronutrients are clearly also important, and since fat is to be recommended as the major source of calories, it is probably also important to recommend emphasizing or avoiding particular types of fat, but these kinds of recommendations should be given a secondary status to the macronutrient recommendations. The “wide variety of food” recommendation should take care of most micronutrient needs for most people.

ML Harris, 13. January 2009, 9:47



First: Benefits

- 1- Weight loss
- 2- Blood pressure reduction
- 3- Cholesterol improvement
- 4- Acid Reflux elimination
- 5- Lean Body Mass protection and enhancement
- 6- Adipose tissue reduction, including abdominal adipose tissue
- 7- Increased energy
- 8- Hunger reduction
- 9- Caloric reduction (Possibly a sustainability issue, maybe not)
- 10- Steady energy, no peaks and valleys

That's what I've seen, personally. Others control PCOS, Diabetes, etc.

Second: Guidelines

I think you need two sets of standards to address the concerns of everyone. Before anyone suggests this is out of line with government work, let me remind you:

- 1- I work for the government
- 2- The government already has two standards for nutrition: the basic Pyramid+ and the weight loss version.

Point 2 is exactly how I want to chop it.

On all versions:

Eat 1g protein per kg of weight. Or, in simple english, eat at least .5g of protein per every lb of weight. Roughly.

Eat a minimum of 3 servings of green leafy veggies (include a list similar to Atkins induction veggies) (I dunno that this helps, but it makes the Veggie Mafia shut their soy holes)

On the maintenance version: Do not eat more than 100g of carbs per day. Do not eat more than 30g of carbs at one sitting.

On the weight loss version: Do not eat more than 50g of carbs per day and do not eat more than 15g of carbs at one sitting.

On all versions: Free sugars should comprise no more than 2.5% of daily intake. (currently, there is no limit to this, and they balked at a 10% cap)

That is simple. Easy.

18. [Pamela Brink](#), 13. January 2009, 9:49



If I were to advocate what I consider to be a "healthy diet" for all Americans to strive for, and recognizing that one diet does not fit all, I would suggest:

The Zone

Maintenance from Protein Power using the Hedonist protocol

South Beach Maintenance

Changing the first level of the Food Pyramid from 8-12 servings of grains and starches to a maximum of 3 and increasing the number of servings of protein.

Basic assumptions: protein and fat are good for you and are the basis of the daily diet with carbohydrates in moderation.

19. [Aaron](#), 13. January 2009, 9:53



I agree the suggestion should be one of inclusion. Keep the food pyramid, just turn it upside down. Keep carbohydrates to 10-20 percent of calories. Eat large amounts of leafy green vegetables. Make meats a centerpiece of your meal. Avoid sugars and starches. Even the food guidelines didn't say to eliminate fat, it placed it in the food pyramid in a position that limited it's consumption. That's what we do for carbs.

When fat was made the bad guy, people didn't stop eating meat, they ate the kind of meat that kept their fat low. By suggesting that you eat 10-20 percent of your calories from carbs, even if you don't tell people to eliminate sugar, ideally people switch to a diet that allows them to eat the foods with less carbs. Instead of going from steak to chicken like we did when fat was limited, we go from bread to veggies when carbs are limited. The suggestion of limits changes how people see the food and they start looking for ways to keep eating while avoiding the dense version of those foods. Steaks are treat for some people now who think they should keep fat low. That should be how people feel about pasta. You don't tell them not to eat it, you make it so it seems like a treat.

20. Kathy from Maine, 13. January 2009, 10:18



I've always been one to be very focused once I decide to do something. In my 20s, low/no-fat/high-carb was the way to go, ala Miss Jane Brody. I fell for it hook, line, and sinker. I never had any blood work done then, so I can show a comparison. What I can say is that I gained weight year after year. My regimen for years and years (I kept journals) was no more than 1200 calories, 10% fat, very little protein, lots of pasta and breads, some veggies (including starches), and occasional desserts (though usually non-fat ones). I was also exercising 5 to 6 days a week, high-intensity step aerobics for an hour a day.

Over the course of maybe 10 years I went from 135 pounds to 195 pounds.

Then, around 1998 I read an article that said American women don't get enough protein, despite what we've been told. I thought about it, and decided maybe they're right. So, I went to the bookstore, where I found and purchased the Eades' Protein Power. I read it cover to cover and it was all so obvious.

In a couple months I dropped 20 pounds. Then I got cocky and thought I could sneak in some carbs here and there. I gained 10 pounds back over the course of several months.

Then I got serious. Right by the book. I dropped a total of 40 pounds and maintained in the low 150s for a couple years. Rather effortlessly, I might add. Virtually no exercise, except toward the end when I actually FELT like exercising (weights and some aerobics).

I don't have comparisons, but my blood pressure was right around 110/70, total cholesterol was 198, HDL 73, LDL 110, Triglycerides 72, total/HDL 2.71, LDL/HDL 1.51, Triglycerides/HDL .99. That was in 2002. In 2005 the results were virtually the same.

I felt GREAT and had good self-esteem.

Stay away from sugar and starches, eat lots of meat and fat (preferably saturated), berries from time to time, and a few veggies if you must.

21. Pam, 13. January 2009, 10:38



My suggestion to the Metabolism Society would be to look at the guidelines, menus and recipes from the Protein Power Books.

TS, 13. January 2009, 10:57



How about a simple plan to follow, only allowed foods are those that have 1 item on the ingredient list.

22. Tony K, 13. January 2009, 11:10



There are two aspects to consider: What is recommended and what people will follow.

A government recommendation should be guided by the first consideration. People can choose what they will, but a bad recommendation will kill people.

So that's my bias. Do the right thing.

"Starches and sugars are not necessary in the human diet. They may be useful for and tolerated by people requiring

extremely high levels of physical performance, but that is a small %-age of the population. Negative effects of ingestion of starch and sugar-based carbohydrates are common and accumulate over time. ”

“For those with symptoms of metabolic syndrome (high triglycerides, high blood pressure, obesity), complete avoidance of starches and sugars is recommended.”

23. Ellen Ussery, 13. January 2009, 11:34

I must agree with others who have said that the starting place should be to suggest not ingesting starches and sugars, and probably anything processed.

Since I have been on low carb I have dropped 45 pounds, my blood glucose is in check (I was severely hypoglycemic, a precursor to diabetes), and I am generally healthier. Before I started low carb I was lethargic, depressed, overweight, and generally ill all the time. I used to get sick if I even looked at anyone else who was ill. In the last two years that I have been on a low carb way of eating I have visited the doctor twice for illnesses, both time diagnosed with a virus. Before low carb I was sick and visiting the doctor maybe a dozen times throughout the year with upper respiratory infections and the like. I also no longer have heartburn, which had become such a problem (acid reflux) that I had lost my voice from it for three months.

Low carb has boosted my immune system so much that everyone else in my family has been sick with the flu over the past couple of months and I have not succumbed to it. But rather was well enough to take care of every one of them.

I am on no prescription medications; I no longer spend a fortune on doctor's visits or being hospitalized. My skin glows, my eyes sparkle and no one believes me when I tell them I'm 44 years old. I owe it all to low carb eating. I know I do.

24. Debbie, 13. January 2009, 13:11



I guess you could call me a Protein Power dropout. I started PP initially in 1997 after seeing a very obese friend become slim and handsome on it. I loved his claims of eating ham and cheese omelets (hold the toast and potatoes) every morning for breakfast. I started on PP in May of 1997, and by 1998 was down 80 pounds. I was heavily overweight however and still had another 70 to go! But I thought my goal was certainly achievable by the year 2000, which I was aiming for. Except at that point my weight loss just STOPPED, even with 70 lbs to go. I was active on low carb internet groups and tried everything they suggested to break my stall - eat MORE calories, eat FEWER calories,

exercise MORE, exercise LESS, more FAT, less FAT, more CARBS, fewer CARBS, eliminate DAIRY, eliminate various other things I've forgotten. The year 2000 finally rolled around and I was still 70 pounds overweight - and I sort of gave up and went back to my old carby ways, in a major depression.

I allowed myself to forget all the *good* things about LC. my dreadful GERD symptoms had totally vanished, I had lots of energy, I was more mentally alert than ever, my blood lipid numbers were fantastic, the asthma-like breathing issues I experienced pretty regularly had vanished.

Naturally they all came back again once I began consuming carbs again - especially sweet, empty sugar and white calorie carbs, baked goods being my downfall.

So my wishes for the government guidelines?

1) Stop so much emphasis on GRAINS! The company I work for sends a periodic newsletter from something called "Spark People". Does anyone know it? Their "diet" suggests, for example, 42-63 servings of whole grains a week! (EEEEK) with fewer than 25 a week being a "danger sign" of a bad diet. Their fat guidelines are for fewer than 7 teaspoons a week, with over 14 being a "danger sign". Their recommended fats are: "1 tsp canola, olive, peanut oil; 1 tsp corn, safflower, soybean oil" - olive or peanut are the only ones there I would touch with a 10-foot pole.

2) Stop demonizing fats.

I guess in the end if I could just get them to admit that eating anything made with white flour and white sugar is not the same as eating sweet potatoes more "natural" examples of carbs I guess I would feel a bit happier.

25. [Craig](#), 13. January 2009, 13:14



I definitely don't agree with a "one-size-fits-all" dietary recommendation, but the feds could go a long way by at least dramatically reducing the recommended level of carbs, and perhaps educating the public a little on carbohydrate metabolism, and the fact that you don't need any carbs to survive.

26. [ethyl d](#), 13. January 2009, 13:45



Here's how I'd like to answer the members of the USDA if I could speak to them personally about what nutritional guidelines to provide for Americans:

1. You need to decide what is more important to you: support for the wheat, corn, soy, and sugar industries, or the

health of Americans. Your food pyramid as it now stands is monetarily beneficial to said industries, but is disastrous for the health of Americans.

2. You need to wrap your minds around the fact that the nutritional advice you have dispensed for the past forty years is dead wrong. A diet with carbohydrates as the largest daily food group makes people fat and/or sick.

3. You have been embarrassingly wrong for the past forty years about the dangers of fat in the diet. The extreme fat reduction you have recommended makes people fat and/or sick.

4. Your dietary recommendations for the last forty years are largely responsible for the amount of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, autoimmune disorders, depression, and more that Americans experience in ever-increasing numbers.

5. I visited the MyPyramid.gov Web site and found your pyramid to be what one would expect government bureaucrats to create: unnecessarily complicated, confusing, filled with misinformation, and condescending. It claims to be "science-based," but does not admit—or understand?—that it is based on junk science that has been poorly conducted.

6. If you want to give the population at large advice about what to eat to be healthy or to correct many health problems, it should go something like this:

a. Eat mostly real food, not food products processed in food labs.

b. Make the time to prepare almost all of your meals at home from scratch. Know what's in the food you eat.

c. Retrain your body to derive its energy from fat instead of carbohydrates by fueling it with quality fats such as lard, coconut oil, butter, nut oils, and olive oil. Eliminate all trans fat from the diet, and drastically reduce the amount of fat from vegetable oils. Saturated fat is good for you, enjoy it.

d. Limit carbohydrates to those derived from low-starch vegetables and low-sugar fruits. See how much better you feel when you don't eat wheat, corn, soy, rice, potatoes, pasta, legumes, or other grains, or foods containing them.

e. Know how much protein you need to consume daily to maintain your lean body mass and make sure you eat at least that many grams every day.

f. If you eat dairy products, make sure they are full-fat.

g. Eat nuts in moderation.

h. Almost never eat sugar.

i. Quit worrying about your cholesterol. Every cell in your body needs it. Eat foods that contain it. Eat lots of eggs.

j. Get out in the sun regularly or make sure you supplement with plenty of vitamin D3.

Now these are some nutritional guidelines that might actually benefit people!

27. Richard A Guilford, 13. January 2009, 14:28



As a simplistic approach, the following is the kind of thing they are looking for:

For everyone facing overweight, about 70 percent of the total American population, refined sugars should be limited to not more than 100 calories per day, or 25 grams of carbohydrate.

If this were spelled out in terms of percentage of total diet, it would make more sense, but be less comprehensible to the folks who need to understand it.

28. Hugh, 13. January 2009, 14:48



In my recommendation I stated that a small percentage of calories (10-20%) can come from whole grains and starchy vegetables, because to me it meets the criteria of being "a reasonable recommendation the USDA could put out".

29. ellen, 13. January 2009, 15:06



The everyday benefits of eating fewer carbs for me include having much more energy, being much less tired, really wanting to get up and go to the gym and work out, not thinking about food all the time, not being hungry, the tremendous relief from cravings - realizing, in short, that so many weaknesses I had previously attributed to a lack of willpower (snacking, lazing around, etc) were actually easily fixable nutritional issues and not all in my head. The feeling of control and of physical well-being, of being in balance, is a fantastic trade for a few sugars and starches. It is a bargain, in fact, one I am grateful for every day.

So, based on my own experience, I would urge the USDA to recommend a diet high in protein, leafy vegetables, fruits, nuts and oils, limited in legumes, and very restricted in sugars and starch. Simple as that.

30. Reinaldo A. Z. Garcia, 13. January 2009, 15:14



Change comes with time and persistence. And since the facts are in favor of effective weight loss and improved health for those who restrict carbohydrates, I believe it's just a matter of time before the tide turns.

Now here's a little anecdote. I am a college professor and dean. A dietitian on our faculty wanted me to have a blood test as she was concerned that my cholesterol would be through the roof. Prior to that I had taunted her by declaring

that my favorite breakfast is 3 eggs and 4 slices of thick bacon and that pork rinds and sardines are a healthy snack (you can imagine her reaction).

Well, the blood test came back with a total cholesterol value under 180 (I don't have the lab document with me at the moment) and triglycerides under 50. She remarked that my results were good but would not credit the low carb diet. I imagine that she's thinking that I have "good genes."

31. Angela, 13. January 2009, 16:37



It seems to me if eating whole, unprocessed foods could be promoted and emphasized and all the ads for the unprocessed foods eliminated it would go along way towards healthier eating. Especially with our children - since they are so influenced by the TV ads.

Personally, I do moderate low carb because I feel better, don't have low energy days and can give blood without the usual lethargy that normally follows my giving a pint of blood. And my labs are nearly perfect.

32. Erin in Flagstaff, 13. January 2009, 18:46



I've lost 50 pounds and counting by eating LC. What's funny is that I didn't start LCing to lose weight. I don't believe in diets as they cause food obsessions in me (I crave what I tell myself I "shouldn't" eat). After reading Taubes "Good Calories, Bad Calories" I cut the sugar and refined carbs because I didn't want to eat carbs! That book was an eye opener. I then read some of the diet books on LC, including Protein Power Lifeplan, just to see what recommendations were out there.

My eating plan:

- Half my plate holds veggies and/or some fruit.

- If I can't eat lots of veggies at once, I choose a smaller plate. (I rarely use a regular dinner plate, the salad plates fill me up nicely)

- The other half of the plate holds protein and fat.

- Snacks work the same way — try to have a protein and some kind of veggie or fruit.

-Sugar is for special events, and try to find the most gorgeous version of sugar — no cheap candy bars, make it quality chocolates or homemade cake or rich ice cream. Expect to feel miserable afterwards no matter the quality.

Sure, there's a lot more things I do, like keep my fruit as low carb as possible, stay away from starchy veggies, buy quality meats, etc., but the plate rule seems to help. If I do that at least 80% of my week, I'm doing much better than I used to.

My energy is high. I've even started taking a P.E. class at the university I work at. My low-grade depression is gone. My joints and feet aren't complaining all day long.

I just wish there was an easy way to convince people on the danger of carbs. My mom just had a quadruple bypass after having a heart attack. She is a Type 2 diabetic and has been for years. Eating low fat didn't help her, nor did all the medications she took for years do anything to stave off further damage. I don't want to end up like that.

33. [Barry in Indy, 13. January 2009, 19:54](#)



How about these simple statements:

1. Proteins are essential to health and control hunger.
 - Eat eggs, cheese, fish, poultry, meat, and/or nuts -
2. Fats are essential to health and will not make you fat.
 - Eat natural fats; do not eat trans fats -
3. Colorful-carbs are good-carbs.
 - Eat fresh, colorful vegetables -
4. White-carbs are bad-carbs. They increase hunger and your risk for obesity and disease.
 - Restrict sugar, cereals, crackers, cookies, soda, chips, fries, bread, pasta, etc -
5. Scientific studies demonstrate that carbohydrate-restricted diets are safe.

34. [Andrea L., 13. January 2009, 20:14](#)



In my experience the main reason low-carb is hard to sustain is because the whole world is eating (mainly processed) carbs! So at any social occasion, there's little or nothing I can eat. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone served the good stuff?

Recommendations that might do some good: limit sugar and starch. Eat more fish and non-starchy vegetables. Eat good fats. (Then eventually we work on naturally saturated fats being good.) Eat meat that doesn't have antibiotics or hormones. (At least it tells people to eat meat.) These are all things that have a chance of sneaking past the low-fat defenses, and the smarter people will be encouraged to actually research the matter and find out what's what.

35. Kris, 13. January 2009, 21:00



About a year and a half ago I went to my doctor complaining of various symptoms such as aches, pains, lightheadedness, lethargy, tingling sensations in limbs and general brain fog. Tests showed I had high liver readings and borderline diabetes. The liver reading was said to likely be due to fatty liver as a result of a poor diet since all other possibilities were ruled out. I was already familiar with the diet usually prescribed for diabetics; I have a few family members with the disease. However, I was fortunate enough to have a doctor who was a bit more informed than many. When I described my understanding of the diabetic diet as consuming whole grains, whole wheat pasta etc. as well as proteins, my doctor corrected me by stating a starch is a starch, whole grain or not - they are all metabolized like sugar - therefore I needed to stay away from them. He suggested I seek out some of the low carb books on the market. That is how I ended up with 'Protein Power' by the Eades.

I followed the suggestions in the book, keeping my carb intake to 10 grams or less per meal. I was to come back in 6 months for a follow up exam. The next set of blood tests revealed normal liver readings and normal blood sugar. I had lost almost 34 lbs. I felt terrific - energetic, clear headed, no pains, no tingling in my limbs. Plus I was exercising again. I attribute this success to the low carb diet. I knew within 2 weeks of eating this way that positive things were taking place in my body. You only need to try it to know this is how we were meant to eat.

It is disturbing that literature put out by the Diabetes Association recommends eating between 40 to 60 grams of carbohydrates per meal and eating meals often. These are people who are extremely sensitive to carbohydrates. What is the implication for the rest of us? I can't help but feel that the dramatic results I have obtained in such a short amount of time as well as the positive results of many, many others as indicated in Dr. Eades posts, combating conditions a high carbohydrate low fat diet helped to create, suggests the prospect of an exciting future of better health for our children, if only there was support to show them the way. I would hope that just getting people well right now is reason enough to act towards getting new nutritional guidelines enacted.

36. ITW, 13. January 2009, 23:14



A moderate carb diet is probably just as effective as an ultra low carb diet for PREVENTING disease, and the odds of someone actually doing this long term is a whole lot better than a diet that forbids all sugar and bread and pretty much makes your life really inconvenient.

Trigger- The obesity epidemic is 30 years old. Diets high in carbs are thousands of years old. There is a whole lot more than carbs behind this problem and it is unnecessary to eat a borderline ketogenic diet simply to avoid being obese or diabetic (note, once these conditions have developed eating very low carb may be required for life... but not to prevent the disease itself).

Push the moderate low diets; when those are accepted and industry changes, then there is room for tolerance of therapeutic very low carb diets in the medical world.

All of us, including Dr Feinman, probably agree a low carb diet is the way to go for all people.

The question is, how do we get people to actually reduce their carb intake? So the question is, how do we actually get people to make changes that reduce carb intake, which are realistic and effective?

37. hkaraki, 14. January 2009, 2:09



Here are my two cents, I eat low-carb'ish for a different reason: acne. I'm 27 female at a normal weight but I suffered from acne for a long time. Only a person who goes through bad acne can get how miserable and isolated it can make you.

Avoiding high carb meals and food cleared my skin in days. That made me first elated then tremendously angry over all the creams, antibiotics and Accutane I had to go through. So at least for the teens/young adults suffering from acne, low carb will be a benefit. Another perk is increased muscle tone.

38. Michael Richards, 14. January 2009, 2:56



Before adopting low carb, I had a fatty liver, passed at least 2 kidney stones and — despite trying — couldn't run more than 200 m without stopping.

Now, and about 30 kg lighter, in the last three days I have (1) run along the beach, 5km effortlessly, (2) swum 1 km twice. No more kidney stones. And, though I am actually not a believer in lots of exercise, I exercised so much because I have so much energy to spare I did it out of sheer joy. My wife over the last 8 weeks has lost 10 kg and I have lost 10 kg in the last 6 months and am edging towards my ideal weight. I couldn't help noticing while I ran along the beach in my Speedos the admiring glances from the fair sex. It's great to be alive. I owe it all to low carb.

Otherwise, with my previous ailments, a shortened lifespan would have been mine — so the endocrinologist told me.

My recommendations? The low-carb food pyramid? Maybe. There are several versions. Perhaps the easiest with the greatest effect for the littlest effort: eliminate starches, wheat and grains. Including whole grains. It's not the complete answer, but it will go a long way to help.

Thank you from the depths of my heart,

Michael Richards

39. [Deborah, 14. January 2009, 3:34](#)



I agree that we need to be practical in offering low-carb recommendations, about what a general population would be willing and able to do.

I myself have been basically low carb for 7 years. I started out via the carb addicts diet, which I now see as an invaluable stepping stone to 'true' low carb, as just like the majority of the world, I couldn't conceive of giving up all my favourite foods. After a year and a half and fifty pounds gone, I had stalled for months, and knew my 'reward' meal was turning into a binge. I had also done more reading on atkins, protein power etc, and had discovered it wasn't the 'fad' 'unhealthy' diet I'd been told it was, and that it was the logical next step. So for 5.5 years, I've been doing low carb 'properly' and lost another fifty pounds, down to where I was maintaining, at around 150-155lbs. Last year I got pregnant, and was so sick during the first four months of the pregnancy that I couldn't face anything but carbs, despite trying really hard to stay away from them. I threw up most of it for two months, but when the throwing up lessened to once a day, I started gaining weight at a ridiculous rate, because I was still eating carbs. I couldn't get back to low-carb until I was in my 23rd week. Once I did, however, I stayed at the same weight for the rest of the pregnancy, so I only gained 26 pounds through the pregnancy. However, I also didn't lose much of that weight after I gave birth - only the weight of the baby and placenta, really. I know it is because I put on the majority of my weight

during the first half of the pregnancy. I also could not focus, for the first ten weeks of my baby's life, on eating well - I just had to eat whatever was at hand, and whatever kept me going. I started back to low carb on and off, but I only really got 'back on the wagon' two weeks ago, and am now solidly low carb again. I have twenty pounds to lose to get back to my pre-pregnancy weight, but I am not dieting, just eating protein, fats and non-starchy veggies in whatever quantities I want.

Anyway, that's my story. The question in hand is very important.

I agree that to make these guidelines people will actually consider you can't go 'ultra' low carb.

i would emphasize protein and good fats (so as not to get people worried about saturated fats etc, even if we know there's no problem with them) and suggest minimizing not only white flour and sugar but grains in general. also emphasize always balancing - so always having protein and fats in a meal to balance carbs, dont' just have carbs. have your plate be, for example, half protein, quarter low-starch veggies, and a quarter brown rice/quinoa/whole grains etc. as much fruit and veg as you want, except for potatoes. and sugar and processed foods to be reserved for the occasional treat.

my husband is skinny and obviously has a metabolism that deals fine with carbs, but having read Good Calories, Bad Calories, we tried to work out what number of sugar grams a day would equal the consumption of sugar 100 years ago, ie before the current epidemic etc. We came out with, if I remember correctly, 20g. So if someone with no issues with their weight or metabolism currently could be persuaded onto a better diet, I think it would be best with the kind of guidelines my husband is trying to follow - very little white flour or sugar, complex carbs to be brown/as unprocessed as possible, with plenty of protein and fat. Even though he is skinny, I've had to deprogram him from fat=bad - he was eating low fat before we met!

40. Deborah, 14. January 2009, 3:48



Oh, one other thing.

I would highly recommend switching focus AWAY from dieting. focus should be on eating for health, not weight. Yo-yo dieting, which is usually low-fat, only destroys the metabolism. I for one know that I may have been overweight (I was 180lbs by age 16), but I would never have got up to 250lbs if it wasn't for my attempts at low-fat dieting. I ate whatever I wanted before that, and after the initial rise during puberty to 180lb, I stayed the same. If people ate less processed foods, and focused on getting in good proteins and fats at every meal, minimizing starches and sugars, they would probably remain stable in weight and health.

41. keywee, 14. January 2009, 4:59



I am not overweight and never have been. I've been eating very low carb for 10 years now because I have more energy and build and maintain muscle most efficiently doing so. I am not a fitness fanatic, I just simply enjoy being active and want to age without disease. The by-products that are created when our bodies must turn carbs into fuel is damaging throughout our system, not just our fat cells. The process that does this is meant to be a BACK UP system, to avoid starvation, not our body's primary fuel system. These by-products (free radicals, oxidants, tryglicerides, etc...) are responsible for Alzheimer's, some cancers, heart/arterial disease, diabetes, and so very much more - all the "diseases of civilization" can be linked to this process and the toll it takes on our system. THIS is why it's good for the population at large to restrict carbohydrate intake.

42. Trinkwasser, 14. January 2009, 5:12



Have a look here

<http://www.diabetes.co.uk/diabetes-forum/viewtopic.php?f=18&t=3763>

a nice summation of the types of story we have seen over many years in all diabetes newsgroups and forums.

OK, the plural of anecdotes is not data

BUT

consider the almost total lack of similar anecdotes where people claim such successes on high carb low fat "official" type diets, there are probably one or two people per forum who genuinely do well on such a diet (plus several pretenders)

Yet not only is the official recommendation still for a diet that does not work for the majority of diabetics (and the same is undoubtedly true for obesity and other conditions) they are STILL looking for data to back it up while ignoring the ever increasing amounts of data which agree with the anecdotal evidence provided above, or at best recommending reduced carbs only as a temporary measure.

Never eat anything your grandparents wouldn't recognise as food?

43. Michael, 14. January 2009, 5:25



What about focusing recommendations on the following?

1. Avoid excessive fructose and thus sugar, HCFS, and all of the processed "food" that contains it. (Also avoid "natural" products like juice and agave nectar that are high in fructose.) It seems clear that if carbs are bad, fructose carbs are worse.
2. Avoid the commonly used types of vegetable oils, and all of the processed "food" that contains them. Again, n-6 PUFAs are not carbs, but there is enough evidence that these pro-inflammatory and easily oxidized oils are involved in chronic disease. Butter, tropical oils and unhydrogenated lard for everyone!
3. Avoid wheat.

These three items would make most diets effectively low carb anyway, I doubt too many people would binge on baked potatoes, and it is pretty hard to find processed foods that lack HCFS, vegetable oils, and wheat.

Is it clear yet that low carb is effective because it is low carb, or simply because it eliminates various toxic components from the diet (wheat, fructose/sugar/HCFS, veggie oils, and processed crap in general). It would be hard to do a study that could distinguish. But a blanket low carb recommendation might just lead to the creation of tons of processed foods that are low carb but still unhealthy, eventually leading some to conclude that low carb is BS.

Michael Pollan was absolutely right to argue that we humans are not able to create foods that match the quality of what nature has already provided for us. It's too bad he steered off track with the "mostly plants" foolishness - which is of course what most people will probably take from the book since it is what many already believe.

44. Johan, 14. January 2009, 6:18



A realistic approach would be to target sugar and possibly white flour with that. They absolutely should introduce the concept of good carbs vs. bad carbs: Vegetables being good (maybe fruit), white flour being bad. But sugar: "avoid". Demonizing sugar like they've demonized (saturated) fat in the past would work nicely.

Another compromise would be for the government to acknowledge that not all animal fat is bad and maybe state that "less than half of egg, pork and poultry fat is unsaturated". Dairy fat may be eaten "in moderation in the context of an otherwise health diet". Then little by little they could stop just talking about saturated fat... Promote nuts (though too high in PUFA for me, hard to think people would overdo them?) , ban trans-fats.

State that sugar is worse than animal fat. This is IMO very important, for for many it's a case of buying either low-fat high sugar concoctions like yoghurt, or plain, fatty yoghurt.

This way they'd only insult the sugar lobby, not other major industries.

I'm thinking pragmatically. No way are they going to do a 180-turn turn to low carb, high animal fat, but these kinds of little changes would be possible.

45. Stargazey, 14. January 2009, 9:40



- a. Eat mostly real food, not food products processed in food labs.
- b. Make the time to prepare almost all of your meals at home from scratch. Know what's in the food you eat.
- c. Retrain your body to derive its energy from fat instead of carbohydrates by fueling it with quality fats such as lard, coconut oil, butter, nut oils, and olive oil. Eliminate all trans fat from the diet, and drastically reduce the amount of fat from vegetable oils. Saturated fat is good for you, enjoy it.
- d. Limit carbohydrates to those derived from low-starch vegetables and low-sugar fruits. See how much better you feel when you don't eat wheat, corn, soy, rice, potatoes, pasta, legumes, or other grains, or foods containing them.
- e. Know how much protein you need to consume daily to maintain your lean body mass and make sure you eat at least that many grams every day.
- f. If you eat dairy products, make sure they are full-fat.
- g. Eat nuts in moderation.
- h. Almost never eat sugar.
- i. Quit worrying about your cholesterol. Every cell in your body needs it. Eat foods that contain it. Eat lots of eggs.
- j. Get out in the sun regularly or make sure you supplement with plenty of vitamin D3.

46. nonegiven, 14. January 2009, 10:10



First things first. Get them to admit the pyramid is designed to promote grain agriculture and edible product manufacture, not health. Get the AMA, AHA, ADA, etc. to stop promoting the pyramid like they do. First, get them to admit white carbs are poison to us and then, that the brown ones aren't much better. Just get them to lower the starch requirement a bit, then a bit more and a bit more until its an occasional 'treat.' Start with the came's nose under the tent and see if that doesn't help lower the incidence of obesity and disease. I can't see how to get them to stop recommending vegetable oils instead of animal fats, they'll all have to die off first, but vegetable oils probably have as much to do with bad health and obesity as sugar and grain.

47. Katy, 14. January 2009, 12:08



I do think that a great many people would be willing to cut their carbs if they didn't think they'd be jeopardizing their health in the process. I know a lot of people who'd love to eat omelets for breakfast and put butter on their vegetables, but who don't "dare" because it's not authorized by their physicians (or their well-meaning spouses). I had a professor in college, an intelligent lawyer, who wouldn't touch the shrimp at an awards banquet because his wife, a nurse, would kill him if she found out because shrimp contained a lot of cholesterol and his was already high. He was not fat in the least, but was actually fairly lean. For many people, permission from authority figures means everything.

48. Henry Miller, 14. January 2009, 12:54



I think we should demand a focus on true science. That means anything that cannot be backed up with a large scale, carefully controlled, and peer reviewed study should not be there.

Hmm... Looks like there is nothing on the recommendations list now (except perhaps no trans-fats?).

If they need to publish something, let them recommend careful food diaries, which also include the amount of exercise, sleep. Tweak diet as required to get the exercise numbers in line.

While this isn't perfect, at least you know if you are setting a PR on deadlifts, 5k run, and situps (exercises selected at random), your diet isn't holding you back.

49. kateryna, 14. January 2009, 13:00



Regarding low-carb eating, after decades of poor health, just following a really low carb diet has fixed all my health problems (migraines, arthritis, heart disease, depression). I am 59 years old and take no medications even though at one point 13 years ago I suffered a stroke and was on my way to all sorts of health issues that would have probably claimed my life years ago. I decided to ignore doctors and medications and instead treat myself with food. I knew that it was food that was the answer. That started my journey in search of healthy foods for the body and stumbled on low-carb eating by accident. Boy was I surprised at how great I felt.

Financially, low carb eating can be cheaper than all that dead stuff that comes in packages. Eggs, ground pork, chops, chicken, tuna, sardines, herrings, cheese, cabbage, cauliflower, nuts, berries, lard, tomatoes are healthy and inexpensive.

50. Daedala, 14. January 2009, 14:23



Eat food. Mostly fats. Skip the starch.

51. Noah, 15. January 2009, 12:23



My recommendation:

Keep Protein high, Fat mod to high, and carbs low.

Starches, sugars, chemical fats, gone. Vegetables, beef, seafood, poultry, spices, in.

What I don't get is that it really isn't rocket science.

Want a low carb meal for \$3 on the run? 3 McDonald's plain hamburger, toss the buns and you're good to go. Saltier than I like, but it gets the job done. I'm sure others here have their own on the go low-carb meal.

I've been doing this for years. And people are still like "you're still doing that". But the truth is that the diet is easy, and the health benefit is amazing. The benefit being I don't have to worry about my health. Every blood test, perfect. Every physical, perfect. And I know from reading this blog that people that do this consistently experience the same thing.

52. Paul B., 15. January 2009, 13:22



Another advantage of LC—many of us have an intolerance to grains, to a greater or lesser extent, and feel so much better without them. I used to eat high carb, low fat, with lots of those whole grains that are supposed to be so good for you. Felt bloated and gassy much of the time, with occasional urgent trips to the bathroom. I cut out grains and problem solved. I'm sure others have similar experiences.

Guidelines? Everyone has to find what works for them. I eat no grains, refined or concentrated sugars, or processed vegetable oils. Limit myself to 1 cup of whole milk per day, 2 oz. cheese, 1 oz. nuts (not eaten by themselves, but mixed in with a salad or stir fry, to avoid going overboard), 2 small pieces of fruit. Beyond that I eat all the meat/seafood/poultry/eggs and low-carb vegetables I need to satisfy my appetite (cooked with real butter or coconut oil). How could anyone not enjoy eating like that? Probably 70-80 g of carbs per day. (I don't count grams but eat pretty much the same things every day.) I'm 42, have a 30" waist, and feel great.

The recommendation I would add is that if you couldn't extract significant nutritional energy out of it in raw state a food should not be a substantial contributor to your diet—you are obviously not bio-engineered to handle it. Also, minimize processing of food in general; let the body do what it was designed to do. Not that I am a raw diet advocate, I like my meat cooked thank you. I just don't want it pre-chewed and partially digested. The same goes for vegetable products. If you need to freeze dry it and micropulverize it to render it palatable it shouldn't be on your regular menu.

53. Lou, 15. January 2009, 17:00



I lost 50lbs in about 6mos. with this woe and got off of bp meds completely. I would think with all of these testimonials you might get someones attention to the fact that restricting carbs is the way to go. But as someone has allready stated follow the money. Most of america is so brain washed into the low fat and high cholesterol thing i really dont know how long it will take to turn the tide. Having said that you as an individual have the final say as to what you put into your body each day. This woe is a mindset just like any other as you have stated in your books you choose what you eat every day. Ive had people ask me what did you do to lose the weight and have passed your books along to many people.

54. Anne, 15. January 2009, 20:33



What I tell my family (Who will never count carbs or anything remotely like that).

Pick up a package. Ignore the calorie count for the most part. If you see the word "sugar" as one of the first five ingredients, put it back. If you see "partially hydrogenated" anything on the label, put it back. If you see any form of soy flour or soy protein on the label, put it back. If you see high fructose corn syrup anywhere on the label, put it the hell down and run the other way.

Whole grain might in some ways be a little better for you than refined white stuff, but in the long run zero grain is better than whole grain.

But that is neither here nor there...the truth as my cynical self sees it:

The USDA will never implement such recommendations as we would have them recommend because too many industrial and ag concerns and their puppets in the USDA and FDA have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

55. Marilyn, 15. January 2009, 23:08



I think the new government recommendations should go back to my great grandma's wisdom. I promise not to tell where they got it. All this lowfat nonsense has to just stop at some point, and making explanations or doing it in baby steps will just make things worse.

Grandma said to build every meal around protein. Eggs and meat contain the highest quality protein for the human body. Cook food in butter and lard. Avoid sugar and starches, especially if you are overweight.

It is no time for half measures. We are killing our kids by trying to pretend they can eat like cattle.

My own LC story is very similar to all the others. Addicted to carbs in childhood, I tried over and over again to diet. I caved every time to hunger. All the while my symptoms grew: arthritis, GERD, insomnia, migraines, mood swings, irrational anger, depression, anxiety, acne, aching joints, cavities, gum disease, blurred vision, heart palpitations, confusion, constantly cold and always, always, insatiably, insanely hungry.

Now, like magic, all gone, and more good health than I can remember since I was 9 years old. My triglycerides are under 60 and I am calm, happy, productive, energetic, purposeful and HEALTHY. I have not achieved a "normal" weight, but that is a mere detail compared to the quality of life that I now enjoy. It is so sad for me to see the people I work with, some decades younger than I, carefully counting fat calories and becoming more and more starved and more and more ill.

This madness must stop.

56. C Nielson, 16. January 2009, 9:56



I think the way to break through the "sound" barrier is to say that the low carb diet is for people with a problem, e.g, excess weight or insulin resistance. This avoids the unsalable proposition that everyone should eat low carb. In my own household, my wife maintains her weight and reasonable blood parameters while continuing to eat bread, crackers, and cakes. She is not interested in giving these up, and I can't see any good reason for her to do so. On the other hand, I quickly gain weight without limit if I eat like her. So everybody is not identical.

57. Nina Wagaman, 16. January 2009, 10:54



I very much hope that my personal experience with carbohydrate restriction will illustrate that the benefits of this way of eating should not be limited to its use as a therapeutic diet in treating obesity. I was able to solve myriad health issues simply by switching from a "healthy" Mediterranean Diet to a very simple carbohydrate-restricted plan. I expect to continue this highly valuable "therapeutic" diet of carbohydrate restriction to stay healthy for the remainder of my life.

I recommend that a lifestyle of carbohydrate restriction be encouraged as a way of maintaining one's health throughout life. It can be used to regain health and to reverse the metabolic damage done by decades of eating carbohydrates. However, in my opinion, its greatest benefit, by far, is in the creation of a healthy body as one grows from childhood to adulthood and in the maintenance of a healthy and strong body throughout life. Carbohydrate restriction can prevent the development of obesity and Type II diabetes. My personal experience illustrates that it is a powerful tool in reversing metabolic syndrome. Having health and abundant energy to accomplish one's goals is a priceless thing.

Please examine with great seriousness the power that the USDA dietary guidelines have in this country. These guidelines steer the health of a nation. I ask you to choose wellness.

Regards,
Nina Wagaman

58. Mark Levin, 16. January 2009, 13:08



I've thought about this long and hard because I don't just want to repeat what others have said or fall prey to the cynicism that government is basically corrupt and can't be changed.

My opinion is that the single most effective nutritional change would be the recognition that a recommended diet must include all the required Vitamins and Minerals. The beauty of this is that low fat diets DO NOT PROVIDE SUFFICIENT VITAMINS AND MINERALS TO MEET DAILY REQUIREMENTS. See September 12, 13 and 14, 2005 Weight of the Evidence Blog Examining Low-Carb & Low-Fat Diets: Parts 1- 3 showing that even diets from the National Institute of Health could not meet nutritional requirements. As a follow up she offered \$1000 to anyone who could come up with a nutritionally adequate low fat diet.

The focus on macronutrients has obscured the fact that our nutritional requirements are fairly well known and that they're more easily obtained as carbs are reduced.

If all this is too complex, then merely making sure that all of the population has adequate levels of Vitamin D in their blood would do more to reduce mortality from heart disease, cancer, diabetes, etc. than all the miracle drugs of the past 10 years.

59. David H., 19. January 2009, 15:30



"So, the question is: how can the benefits of carbohydrate restriction that you have experienced personally or in your immediate environment be translated into reasonable recommendations that the USDA could put out?"

What would be considered "reasonable"? Something that the general population will go along with? Or nothing too far from what the USDA will accept? My concern is that by making compromises, the resulting carb level will still be too high for the benefits to be achieved, and then people will claim that low carb does not work, a la Oprah's prior attempt to "do" low carb. What of the weight gain that'll surely occur if people try to eat lots of fat while failing to cut carbs to a appropriate level? I've witnessed such complications when individuals within a family try to do low carb, and those still consuming lots of carbs then eat higher fat items, side dishes, etc. along with the low carbers. No, the rules of a low carb plan should not be modified to suit what the average person would prefer, or to appear "reasonable."